

## Just The Ticket [from *Military Officer*, January 2012, page 88]

My first assignment, as a young Air Force captain, was as chief of security and law enforcement at James Connally AFB in Waco, Texas. I was a stickler for enforcing base traffic regulations and vigorously backed my patrolmen on every ticket they wrote. One frequent violator was the base civil engineer, a major. As a result, I was especially exasperated when the base commander who just happened to be the major's next door neighbor, would call and instruct me to give the major a break due to the unusual requirements of his job as base civil engineer. My men would continue to write the major tickets, and the base commander would continue to call and instruct me to "take care" of them.

The major drove a vintage Volkswagen Bug, and he felt he had not only the privilege but also the sworn duty to park wherever he pleased on base. We recently had experienced a spate of automobile thefts on base as a result of drivers leaving their keys in the ignition of their vehicles when they left them unattended. To eliminate this black mark from the theft-and-recovery portion of my yearly law-enforcement reports, I instructed my patrolmen to be especially vigilant for this infraction. Of course, the major continued to be a frequent violator.

One morning, arriving early for the Monday staff meeting. I was quite irritated to find the major's Volkswagen, with the keys in the ignition, parked in the base commander's parking space. It was too much for a young captain to bear. I called the security police desk and requested that a patrolman meet me at the base dump, which was located on the back side of the base. I drove the major's car there, parked it in a prominent location, and put a parking ticket on the windshield. I then had the patrolman take me back to base headquarters in time to take my seat, just as the staff meeting started. My assigned seat was next to the base civil engineer. As I sat down, he handed me a note: -

*You don't have to worry about my Volkswagen anymore. I sold it to the base commander.*

Needless to say, I missed the rest of the Monday morning staff meeting.